



Expectations Out of Sync:  
The Second U.S.-Japan Strategic Dialogue

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## **Pacific Forum CSIS**

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# U.S.-Japan Strategic Dialogue

## February 8-10, 2009, Maui

### Key Findings

The Pacific Forum CSIS brought a small, select group of Japanese and American security specialists together for the second time to discuss Japanese threat perceptions and concerns about the changing strategic environment in East Asia and the nature of extended deterrence. The following are the key findings from this off-the-record dialogue:

– Japanese remain concerned that some of the negative (to them) trends apparent in the last few years of the Bush administration may be sustained or even accelerated with the change of administration in Washington. Several concerns expressed at last year’s meeting were deepened or realized in the past year.

– These include: too much “flexibility” toward North Korea, and fear the U.S. will simply “manage” the proliferation problem rather than push forward with disarmament; increased concern over a diminishment in the value of the alliance in American eyes, caused by frustration over Japanese inertia and political stagnation; frustration over F-22 sales to Japan (or the lack thereof); and the ever-present recurring fear of a perceived U.S. “tilt” toward China.

– One major new concern was fear that Washington would move too quickly on nuclear disarmament or nuclear force reduction in a manner that would tempt China to abandon its current “minimal deterrence” strategy and seek strategic parity. There was also concern that the global economic crisis would accelerate the rise of China at Washington’s and Tokyo’s expense.

– On the plus side, Secretary of State Clinton’s decision to make her first overseas trip to Asia, with her first stop being Tokyo, was cause for great optimism and cast a positive light on discussions of the new Obama administration. Nonetheless, there was concern expressed over what the new administration would “expect” from Tokyo and if Washington would live up to its side of the force transformation/relocation bargain.

– From a U.S. perspective, major concerns focused on Japanese political inertia; the implications of the anticipated change of government in Tokyo, given uncertainty regarding opposition positions on key alliance issues including support to counter-terrorism operations; and fear that Japan would backslide on force transformation promises.

– More positively, there is little difference in regional and global perspectives between the two sides; both see the alliance as invaluable and accept as fact that each sees the other as its key ally, even as each questioned if the other’s level and depth of commitment was increasing or declining.

– *Korean Peninsula:* The removal of Pyongyang from the State Sponsors of Terrorism list without progress on the abductee issue was anticipated; the lack of a quid pro quo – a

verification regime – from Pyongyang was not, and removed the political cover under which Tokyo could have publicly supported the U.S. gesture. This action increased doubts about U.S. reliability and about Washington’s commitment to verifiable denuclearization. Japanese (and Americans) are increasingly skeptical over the Six-Party Talks prospects but see few good alternatives. The impending North Korean missile test also increased Japanese frustrations about the JSDF’s inability to deter, preempt, or effectively respond to North Korean threats and possible hostile actions.

– *F-22 sales to Japan*: “We would rather be told ‘no’ than be kept hanging.” But only for the right reason: U.S. law prohibits F-22 sales to anyone. Should an exception be made for other allies and not Japan, this would cause a significant crisis of confidence. Japan may look at European alternatives if the U.S. refuses to sell the F-22.

– *Disarmament concerns*: Japanese idealistically support a nuclear weapons-free world; realistically they rely on American extended deterrence and are becoming increasingly concerned that proposals to significantly reduce U.S. nuclear arsenals would encourage China to increase rather than similarly restrict its nuclear arsenal. There are also concerns that a U.S. deal with Russia to remove missile defenses from Europe would be used by China or others to similarly reduce missile defenses in Asia, leaving Tokyo more vulnerable to North Korean (and Chinese) missiles.

– *Political issues in Tokyo*. Japan is experiencing a period of profound political and economic uncertainty and gridlock. While support for the alliance remains strong, questions about U.S. reliability are mounting. Yet, political gridlock, combined with a longstanding sensitivity about nuclear issues, means that Tokyo is unable to engage and address these issues, despite their centrality to Japanese concerns.

– *The rise of China*. China casts a long shadow. While ready to work with Beijing (and the U.S.) to encourage China to be a “responsible stakeholder,” Japanese remain acutely aware of, and are hedging against, the potential threat posed by a stronger, more confident China. China poses three distinct concerns: 1) the prospect of a new balance of power in East Asia; 2) the prospect of a U.S.-China condominium that relegates Japan to a secondary role (a fear compounded by Japan’s political inertia); 3) uncertainties about the Sino-U.S. strategic relationship (will the U.S. accept mutual vulnerability with China and, if so, what would be the consequences for the U.S. extended deterrent?).

*Recommendations:*

– The U.S. and Japan should deepen consultation on nuclear doctrine and planning. While there are limits to how far such discussions can go, this effort will help build confidence among allies and facilitate reassurance.

– The U.S. should make greater efforts to include Japan (and other allies) in the process of developing the next Nuclear Posture Review. The need for reassurance should be guiding U.S. thinking. Greater collaboration in preparing for the 2010 NPT Review Conference would provide additional confidence.

- The U.S. should avoid any shift in nuclear strategy or doctrine that would encourage Beijing to abandon its minimum deterrent and embrace theater or limited deterrence. Japanese see missile defense as central to the alliance and the extended deterrent. Development and deployment must proceed
- Conversely, Japan must change its interpretation of the exercise of the right of collective self defense so that Japan can act against a missile that appears to be targeting the U.S. homeland. Japan should also pass laws to provide greater security of information. A law making illegal the disclosure of secret information should be a priority; its absence is an impediment to greater sharing of information.
- Fundamentally, Tokyo must re-conceptualize its contributions to international security. While these are alliance issues, they should first be seen as national security issues. Tokyo should be prepared to act regardless of its alliance commitments. The alliance with the U.S. is a vehicle for action, not necessarily a reason to act.
- Alliance supporters need to ensure that Congress understands the stake and has a realistic and accurate assessment of the U.S.-Japan relationship. For example, a failure by Congress to fund the Guam relocation, especially if it results in a U.S. request for more money from Japan, could strain the alliance.
- The U.S. and Japan should promote greater cooperation with other allies and security partners in Asia. Functional issues should provide the starting point for collaboration. In particular, the U.S., Japan, and South Korea should be planning trilaterally for contingencies on the Korean Peninsula.
- Washington needs to convincingly reaffirm its commitment to complete, verifiable, irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.
- U.S. intentions regarding F-22 sales must be made clear: sell to no one or sell to Japan (among others).
- Washington and Tokyo both need to lay out their respective visions for East Asia and the role of the alliance in this broader regional vision; a new U.S. East Asia Strategy Report (last published in 1998) is needed.
- The core component of a credible U.S. deterrent is a visible U.S. conventional military presence in Asia. Implementation of the realignment initiatives set out by the U.S.-Japan Security Consultative Committee in the May 1, 2006 “United States-Japan Roadmap for Realignment Implementation” is critical to this credibility.
- *Bottom line:* Few Japanese would call the U.S. an “unreliable” ally, but most see Washington as less reliable today than four years ago, even while remaining cautiously optimistic that this trend will be reversed with a new U.S. administration. The challenge for the U.S. and Japan is to understand each other’s expectations, provide reassurance that those concerns will be respected, and then respond when interests are threatened.

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# U.S.-Japan Strategic Dialogue February 8-10, 2009, Maui

## Conference Report

The U.S.-Japan alliance is beset by contradictions. Both countries affirm the centrality of the alliance to their national security; indeed, facing new and diffuse threats, the importance of the alliance has increased in recent years. Yet officials in both capitals voice concern about their partner's ability to fulfill previous commitments and fear that its ally entertains doubts about its own reliability. Even more disconcerting is the continuing reluctance of Japanese to openly discuss doubts about the credibility of the U.S. commitment to Japan's defense: after several years of progress, it looks again like political sensitivities foreclose meaningful discussion of this pivotal concern at the official level.

To better understand the dynamics of the U.S.-Japan alliance, some two dozen security experts and officials (in their private capacities) from the two countries, along with nine Pacific Forum Young Leaders, met in Maui Feb. 9-10, 2009 for the second U.S.-Japan Strategic Dialogue, hosted by the Pacific Forum CSIS and sponsored by the U.S. Defense Threat Reduction Agency. The following report lays out key themes and issues from that conference. While participants have been asked to review these comments, this is not a consensus document; it represents the views of the chair.

### **The Global and Regional Security Environment**

Discussions began with a review of the global and regional security environment. There was little difference in outlook among American and Japanese participants. All agreed that the global financial and economic crisis – and there was no disputing the use of that word – has transformed decision-making. Economic issues are now more significant than ever before and governments are navigating uncharted territory. It isn't clear how economic circumstances will shape national decision making: how, for example, will defense budgets be impacted? The U.S. image has been damaged: the crisis is widely perceived as “made in the U.S.A.,” even though all countries contributed. The global economy is being rebalanced and while it is premature to talk of the end of American predominance, U.S. influence is likely to be reduced (and that of China increased).

China casts a long shadow. Its military modernization programs continue unabated, and Beijing is increasingly ready to flex its muscles when challenged. There are concerns about the impact of a slowdown on China's prospects, but most participants agreed that Beijing emerges from the current situation with enhanced political clout. There was no hyperventilating about the future, however: the U.S. remains flexible and adaptable to changing circumstances, has the assets to weather a difficult period, and has other diplomatic tools – most notably, strengthened ties with other regional countries and renewed “soft power” in the wake of the Obama election win – that largely compensate for recent troubles.

In contrast to China, Japan is going through political trials, with a paralyzed government, a rising opposition, and an election – and the prospect of a historic change in administration – overshadowing all decisions. The election – one is required by September 2009 – is unlikely to end the turmoil; one Japanese participant speculated that uncertainty would continue for at least five years. On the other side of the Pacific, a new administration is settling in, with all the hope and uncertainty that is an inevitable part of that process. Outstanding issues – Iraq, Afghanistan, North Korea – remain, but policy reviews are underway. The Obama administration understands the importance of Asia for the U.S., the centrality of its alliances to U.S. engagement with the region, and the role of the U.S.-Japan alliance as the key pillar in U.S. strategy toward the region. There was no daylight between participants on the importance of the U.S.-Japan alliance to both countries' security.

There was consensus that North Korea remains unyielding and difficult to predict – and needs to remain so to retain the ability to extort assistance from its neighbors. Pyongyang will test the resolve of its neighbors and negotiating partners, but uncertainties now include Kim Jong-il's health and who will succeed him if it should fail. While collapse is a poor bet, internal instability is increasingly possible. The U.S., Japan, and South Korea should be thinking about and planning for contingencies on the Korean Peninsula. While this is a touchy subject given Japan's history on the peninsula, Tokyo has a role to play as events unfold. Deft diplomacy is required – and there has been little progress to date.

All participants acknowledged the need to tackle growing instability in South and Southwest Asia, especially in Pakistan and Afghanistan. The Obama administration is focused on the situation in Afghanistan and will look to allies for help in stabilizing that country. Japan, along with other nations, needs to assess how it can best contribute. Thus far, discussions in Tokyo have focused on the impact of refusing such a request rather than preparing for it.

Russia figured higher in Japanese calculations than those of the U.S. One Japanese participant warned that Moscow seemed ready to challenge the U.S. and NATO on a global level. Even though the economic crisis had helped lower oil prices – the source of Russia's new-found muscle – he insisted that Moscow is determined to expand its clout over its “near abroad” and in Europe.

New security threats and an evolving security environment force Washington and Tokyo to think differently about power and how to most effectively exercise it. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's reference to “smart power” in her confirmation hearing suggested that the administration has already started this process. The opportunities and challenges are most evident in dealing with Afghanistan, but they are also clear as the two governments face security threats in East Asia as well. While some problems require a military response, many do not: the most important response to terrorism may be law enforcement, intelligence cooperation, or development assistance. Climate change is another pressing new challenge for which the military has only a limited role.

Creative thinking about a new diplomatic palate is especially important for the U.S.-Japan alliance now. Gridlock in Tokyo makes the ever-present legal and political obstacles to

Japanese contributions to security affairs even more difficult to overcome. Frustrations are mounting on both sides: Americans look to Tokyo to live up to previous commitments and to do more, as befits the second largest economy in the world. For their part, Japanese see Americans undervaluing the support they have already provided and disregarding vital Japanese interests. The U.S. decision to drop North Korea from the list of state sponsors of terrorism, despite a lack of progress in Pyongyang's talks with Tokyo over the abductee issue and, more importantly, the lack of a verification protocol in the Six-Party Talks, (which would have provided political covers and lessened the blow) is exhibit one in this indictment. One Japanese participant spoke of "betrayal."

All participants agreed on the need for Japan "to step up" and play a larger role in regional and global security affairs. A Japanese participant explained that Japan is making substantial contributions to regional and global security, but not in the framework of the alliance. He explained that some in the Foreign Ministry (particularly outside the North American Affairs Bureau) see the U.S. as "a troublemaker" and prefer not to work with their U.S. counterparts. At a minimum, they are not accustomed to dealing with the U.S. (This is an interesting contrast to the U.S. where Japan desk officers in the State Department report being regularly consulted by colleagues elsewhere in the building on ways to cooperate with Tokyo.)

This work undermines the assertion by some Americans that Japan is pulling back from global security engagement and refocusing on regional concerns. According to this interpretation, rising threats close to home and contentious domestic political debates have narrowed Tokyo's vision. Several participants challenged the logic distinguishing between theaters. One American participant noted that studies concluded that perceptions of the credibility of the U.S. security guarantee are driven by actions outside the region. Others noted how changes in other regions directly affect Asia: in the 1980s, the prospect of INF redeployments away from Europe alarmed Japanese who feared they could shift the balance of power in Asia. India's nuclear modernization is likely to force a Chinese response with repercussions for Northeast Asia. Regions are more closely linked than many believe.

There is concern among Japanese about the prospect of security multilateralism in Northeast Asia. This is an outgrowth of disillusionment with the Six-Party Talks, and a feeling in Tokyo (and Seoul, it is worth noting) that Washington is committed to the process regardless of outcome. Japanese see what looks like progress in the U.S.-North Korea relationship despite stalemate in their own talks with Pyongyang. They worry about a U.S. readiness to "manage" North Korea's nuclear capacity – i.e., accept its nuclear weapons – as long as Pyongyang pledges not to proliferate. Some blame the Bush administration for being desperate to have a diplomatic victory; others finger U.S. negotiator Christopher Hill. (Some Japanese concede that they are angered at Tokyo's inability to punish North Korea on its own and its reliance on Washington.) Japanese worry about the evolution of the Six-Party Talks into a regional security mechanism, prodded by the Chinese and the Obama administration's "big table" approach. They ask where U.S. alliances will fit into this evolving architecture, their concerns magnified by the paralysis in Tokyo.

Americans insisted Japanese fears are overblown. Alliances continue to be the starting point for U.S. engagement with Asia and realism prevails among U.S. security decision-makers. “There will be no regional security mechanism without regional security,” comforted one U.S. participant. Another noted how bilateral relations dominate regional security discussions among security professionals and practitioners.

### **Nonproliferation and Counterproliferation Strategies**

The second session probed the two nations’ nonproliferation and counterproliferation strategies. Rhetorically, there is little difference between the two countries’ approaches: both oppose the spread of nuclear weapons, are staunch supporters of the global nonproliferation regime, and back a successful extension of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), as well as the plugging of its loopholes. Dig a little deeper, however, and a longstanding divide emerges. Reflecting its singular history, Japan has long put disarmament at the forefront of its nuclear diplomacy, and accepted non- and counterproliferation strategies as second best options. The U.S. has nodded to its Article VI disarmament obligations, but instead has put its emphasis and energy into preventing the spread of nuclear weapons. Another way of saying this is that the U.S. is more concerned with horizontal than vertical proliferation, while Japan is bothered by both.

This division complicates the two countries’ approaches to the Six-Party Talks. Rhetorically, they – like all members of the negotiations – are committed to the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. But, as noted, Japanese worry that the U.S. is prepared to accept a nuclear North Korea as long as Pyongyang does not proliferate its weapons, materials, or know-how to other countries. (U.S. officials – and participants at our meeting – deny any U.S. readiness to acquiesce, but DoD documents that identify North Korea as a “nuclear power – the “Joint Operating Environment 2008: Challenges and Implications for the Future Joint Force” – and the course of the negotiations thus far do not provide reassurance.)

That traditional division may be eroding. In campaign documents, candidate Obama set a goal of a world without nuclear weapons, and promised to pursue it. His platform called for substantial cuts in the U.S. nuclear arsenal, a verifiable global ban on the production of new nuclear weapons material, and a halt to the development of new nuclear weapons, among other measures. Japanese participants called those initiatives “encouraging,” and urged the U.S. to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and conclude a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty (FMCT). In the very next breath, however, those same speakers betrayed nervousness about the implications of such a policy, warning that the U.S. extended deterrent had to be strengthened at the same time those shifts and cuts were underway. There are fears that the U.S. could try to cut too deeply, too fast. Patience, planning, and consultation are essential.

Another important difference in the two countries’ strategies is their approach to the fuel cycle. The U.S. has promoted internationalization of the fuel cycle, preferring that enrichment technology be restricted as much as possible. This approach is problematic on several levels: the NPT promises nuclear technology for all who pledge to use it only for

peaceful purposes. It is especially nettlesome for Japan, which has sought to close the fuel cycle. Instead, Tokyo has promoted its International Initiative on 3S-Based Nuclear Energy Infrastructure, launched at the 2008 Hokkaido G8 summit, which emphasizes nuclear safety, security, and safeguards (3S).

Discussion explored the implications of a serious U.S. commitment to cutting its nuclear arsenal. Participants from both countries agreed that substantial U.S. cuts could have profound effects on the regional balance of power, both in terms of conventional and nuclear weapons. Several speakers worried that a drawdown of nuclear forces could encourage other countries to proliferate, since the gap between nuclear haves and have nots, as well as between the U.S. and Russia – possessors of the largest stockpiles – and other nuclear-armed states would be smaller. Bluntly put, there is fear that a reduction of the U.S. arsenal will encourage China to build up to ensure its own deterrent capabilities. One Japanese participant insisted that “there can be no stable international order without a stable nuclear order.”

If, as one Japanese participant argued, there is no good methodology to explore acceptable levels of nuclear reductions, then there is a premium on consultations between the U.S. and its allies to ensure that deterrence – or perhaps more appropriately, reassurance – is not undermined as Washington moves forward. Those discussions should be quiet; one Japanese urged the Americans to ensure that the issues are not politicized.

Most Japanese participants said that, despite their frustrations, they were not overly worried about the credibility of the U.S. deterrent or the U.S. commitment to Japan’s defense – at present. One, however, noted that reports such as that by the Task Force on Nuclear Weapons Management did raise concerns about the U.S. arsenal. For him, key questions focus on reliability as it relates to the engineering and actual use of such weapons.

When one speaker noted that extended deterrence is of limited value when trying to prevent proliferation, discussion returned to political issues. Nuclear weapons are tools of national security and not substitutes for diplomacy. That line becomes blurred when the military relationship among allies becomes a proxy for the political relationship. Nuclear policy doesn’t have to strain relations among partners, however. A Japanese participant urged Tokyo to use this issue to underscore its utility to the U.S. Japan should figure out how to sustain and support the global nonproliferation regime; one avenue is working with other nonnuclear weapons states to create a political and security environment that allows nuclear weapons states to reconsider their disarmament policies.

## **National Nuclear Strategies**

After that general discussion of nuclear strategy we turned to detailed examinations of national nuclear strategies. We began with an overview of U.S. thinking at the onset of the Obama administration and factors shaping the next U.S. Nuclear Posture Review (NPR), a process mandated by Congress and due by December 2009. A U.S. speaker noted that President Obama has expressed two primary commitments regarding nuclear weapons. The first is to work to create the conditions that might make possible the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons. The other is not to disarm unilaterally and indeed to maintain a strong

deterrent so long as nuclear weapons remain. Echoing a comment in the previous session, he noted that “strong” is an elastic concept leading to very different ideas about what is required in terms of the U.S. force posture.

The speaker pointed out that most of the likely participants in the 2009 NPR are much more familiar with Europe than Asia. That is especially troubling given the “linkages” among theaters mentioned earlier and the prospect of nuclear instability in Asia. In the 1980s, an effort to halt the deployment of Soviet intermediate range forces in Europe could have resulted in a plan to shift them to Asia, until Asian allies pointed out the loophole in the U.S. position. As noted, substantial cuts in the U.S. nuclear arsenal could redefine the U.S.-China relationship: *there is uncertainty whether a U.S. reduction would prompt China to moderate its arms buildup or accelerate to reach parity with the U.S.* This raises questions, as yet unanswered, about the type of strategic relationship the U.S. wants with China. Most fundamentally, is the U.S. ready to openly concede a Chinese deterrent? The right answer is important to find. Equally important is that finding the right answer be done in partnership with U.S. allies and not simply presented to them as an American fait accompli that in one way or another touches on their vital interests.

Another topic for the NPR is whether and how the U.S. will modernize its nuclear arsenal. The U.S. is the only one of the five nuclear powers that has not made the decision to modernize. The aging of the weapons and the triad of delivery systems has some in Washington asking if it is time to retire more parts of the nuclear force. The development of new weapons depends on testing, which would contravene the existing test moratorium and also the CTBT. Again, disarmament obligations raise basic questions about the future of the U.S. deterrent. Yet, this expert warned, the desire to show results at the 2010 NPT Review Conference – a test of Obama’s commitment to a new nuclear strategy, especially after the failure of the 2005 Review Conference – is likely to put a premium on steps toward meeting disarmament obligations in the NPR, rather than concerns about the U.S. deterrent.

There is an understanding of the need for allied input into the nuclear planning process. Members of the Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States, sometimes known as the Perry-Schlesinger commission, have heard from allies and other concerned nations as they have prepared their report. While this is not a part of the NPR, it is a positive indication of the need to be sensitive to allied nations’ concerns and a desire to hear their views during the strategic planning process. The NPR should do likewise.

A Japanese speaker highlighted the changing nature of extended deterrence. Echoing comments at last year’s meeting, he noted that the rise of new threats with differing aims and capabilities requires the U.S. to tailor its deterrent and dissuasion forces to the particulars of each threat; that requires a similar matching of forces to the needs of each ally. It is a complicated arrangement of forces and a multilayered array of messages to be sent, especially when perceptions of threat and the appropriate response are different in the U.S. and its ally, as is so apparently the case in dealing with North Korea. Political discussions and some form of reassurance are critical.

Japan is divided in the face of the Obama administration's twin commitment to disarmament and deterrence. On the one hand, disarmament traditionalists welcome the call for eventual disarmament by the NWS, and reductions in warheads, the de-emphasis of nuclear weapons in U.S. strategy and doctrine, and other measures to reduce nuclear risks. At the same time, the strategic-realist community worries that such cuts could weaken the U.S. extended deterrent. Washington must not undermine its negotiating leverage with North Korea or other nations, and must strengthen its conventional capabilities as the nuclear arsenal is reduced.

Within the bilateral (U.S.-Japan) context, the Japanese presenter called for a more visible nuclear commitment from the U.S. regarding doctrine and capability. That means:

- Sharing basic doctrine regarding nuclear operations and targeting plans against North Korea and China. Both militaries should actively engage in contingency planning including nuclear and conventional warfare. The U.S. should offer more briefings and consult with a wider Japanese community (political leaders, experts, and journalists) when drafting the 2009 Nuclear Posture Review.
- U.S. strategy should be clearer about principles, objectives, and conventional force postures in Asia. The U.S. should again develop an East Asia Strategy Report and it should articulate a firmer U.S. commitment to the region. It should specifically mention the U.S. commitment regarding extended nuclear deterrence.
- This effort could be complemented by a visible U.S. force posture in East Asia. The core component of a credible U.S. deterrent is the U.S. conventional military presence in Asia. Implementation of the realignment initiatives set out by the U.S.-Japan Security Consultative Committee in the May 1, 2006 "United States-Japan Roadmap for Realignment Implementation" is critical to this credibility.
- U.S. nuclear capabilities in Asia should also be strengthened. This could include the introduction of regular stationing (or frequent positioning/war-time positioning) of nuclear forces in Guam with B-52/B-2 strategic bombers. Home-porting nuclear-equipped ballistic missile submarines (SSBN) and cruise missile submarines (SSGN) in Guam is another option. Japan may be able to financially support construction of support/maintenance facilities in Guam in addition to support for the relocation of III-MEF personnel from Okinawa.
- Japanese military capability is an essential part of the extended deterrent. Self-Defense Force (SDF) situational dominance against North Korean aggression (a missile or commando/special operations attack on Japanese soil) and the ability to maintain the bilateral conventional balance of power against China reinforces the joint deterrent. Japan should swiftly modernize and reform the SDF force structure to ensure it has such capabilities. Procurement of F-X, C-X, and P-X to enhance Japanese air superiority in the East China Sea, and improving intelligence, reconnaissance, and surveillance (ISR) capabilities, especially for anti-submarine warfare, (ASW) are essential. U.S.-Japan cooperation on procurement, industry cooperation, and next-generation technology such as in space, should be promoted. F-X procurement should not be politicized as an indicator of alliance status, but policy decisions – such as regarding the availability of the F-22 – should be swift.

Plainly, China is a big factor in Japanese calculations. If North Korea is the immediate concern, Chinese theater capabilities are a more substantial and formidable security threat. Japanese strategists are eager to see the strategic relationship the new administration will seek with China. Will it accept mutual vulnerability, with the concomitant risk (to Japan) of “abandonment” in the event of a crisis? Japanese are quick to see signs and portents – even when they may not exist. For example, Japanese are quick to cite a Congressional Research Service study on the F-22 fighter that suggests Congress’ decision to ban foreign sales of the fighter reflects a desire to avoid antagonizing China; no American had heard the CRS explanation, much less believed it.

Ideally (from the Japanese perspective) Washington will retain its dominance, but our Japanese speaker warned against any shift that would encourage Beijing to abandon its minimum deterrent posture and embrace theater or limited deterrence. He has concluded that a relative nuclear balance is acceptable, if it is asymmetrical: a limited Chinese second-strike capability against the U.S. homeland is OK, as is a limited Chinese medium-range ballistic missile capability that does not undermine the deterrent value of the U.S.-Japan alliance. For our speaker, missile defense is a key component of Japanese efforts to defend against Chinese strategic threats. He endorsed trilateral – U.S.-Japan-China – strategic talks to work out the appropriate balance.

American participants countered that U.S. decisions are not driving Chinese behavior: the most important influence on Beijing is India, noting that the Agni missile really has only one target. Furthermore, one participant argued that Chinese leaders learned the lessons of the Cold War and have developed a strategy and doctrine that suits their needs: they will not be forced into an arms race. They will not compete for parity or beyond.

Japanese see missile defense as central to the alliance and the extended deterrent. Development and deployment must proceed; already, the need for improved capabilities is evident. But, Tokyo must change the interpretation of the exercise of the right of collective self-defense so that Japan can act against a missile that appears to be targeting the U.S. homeland. Our speaker warned that it is important that U.S. negotiations with Russia over the deployment of missile defense in Europe not set a precedent. China is closely watching those discussions and there are fears that a rollback in Europe could encourage China to press for rollback in Asia as well.

American participants were skeptical about meeting the Japanese requests listed above. One explained that the menu laid out by the speaker goes well beyond U.S. cooperation with other allies, on both the nuclear and conventional levels. There is no mechanism for joint nuclear planning and he wondered what the region’s response, in particular that of Beijing and Seoul, would be if such a mechanism were to be established. Others wondered if there are enough experts in Japan to have a meaningful discussion. Alternatively, there were concerns about the political sensitivities surrounding such talks and whether they would deter a real dialogue.

Japanese participants recognize that strengthening deterrence is not a one-way street: their country has to take on more responsibilities as well. The reduction in the number of



U.S. strategic forces puts a premium on their survivability; one Japanese speaker suggested that the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) step up antisubmarine warfare as a way of achieving that goal. He also endorsed Japanese deployment of ships and planes to help patrol and protect Guam as U.S. forces build up there.

Subtly, discussion again moved from deterrence to reassurance. What could the U.S. do to reassure Japan as it develops a new nuclear strategy? Speakers from both countries emphasized that this is a very subjective realm, subject to shifting internal and external conditions (for each country and the alliance itself). Both deterrence and reassurance reflect a variety of factors, nuclear and nonnuclear, political, military, and even social, cultural, and psychological. One Japanese participant insisted that the key was political confidence and argued that consistency in U.S. policy was more important than anything else, even conformity of views between Tokyo and Washington. To ensure that Washington retains Tokyo's trust, one Japanese suggested that the Obama administration first focus on the disarmament part of the equation – a tack that will appeal to the mass audience in Japan – before tackling the more controversial issues pertaining to nuclear modernization. Plainly, there is a premium on Japanese leaders helping to “manage” public opinion on the nuclear issue.

Japanese strategists have suggested that one solution for this problem is replacing Japan's “three nonnuclear principles” – promulgated in 1967 by Prime Minister Sato Eisaku, they state that Japan shall neither possess nor manufacture nuclear weapons nor shall it permit their introduction into Japanese territory – with 2.5 principles, namely allowing the U.S. to station nuclear weapons on Japanese territory or in its waters. In fact, most Japanese believe the “non-introduction” principle has been breached regularly. A U.S. participant cautioned that demands for reassurance that relied on a visible forward presence signaled a retreat to Cold War thinking about “tripwires.” He warned that moving nuclear weapons to the theater would also complicate relations with North Korea which would undoubtedly demand their removal as a condition of its own denuclearization.

Japanese speakers distinguished between deterrence and dissuasion, arguing that the alliance is key to deterrence, while the number of warheads matters for dissuasion. This commenced a discussion of the appropriate level of the U.S. strategic arsenal. A Japanese expert suggested that 1,500 warheads was the right size: at that point, he believes the Chinese will not aim for parity with the U.S. Japan would get nervous about additional reductions to 1,000 unless China ratified the CTBT and the FMCT, and the U.S. invested in a range of strategic and conventional capabilities that would allow it to strike against underground and/or moving targets; provide engineering reliability (i.e., he endorsed the reliable replacement warhead, or RRW); and ensure ISR (intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance) superiority, and counter-access and area denial.

There was considerable discussion about the relationship between nuclear and nonnuclear strategic capabilities. Several speakers insisted that reductions in the U.S. strategic arsenal could be balanced by its conventional superiority in Asia. A Japanese participant argued that China would accept that. Most nuclear weapon states are acquiring strategic conventional strike capabilities. Others warned that dual-use platforms – that carry

both conventional and nuclear munitions – introduce too much uncertainty into defense planning and lowered the threshold for decisions to use nuclear weapons: no military could afford to see what kind of warhead was mounted on the missile headed toward it. Dual-use also has implications for “no first use” doctrines: if nations can’t tell what kind of weapons are being used against them until impact, then no first use becomes the default position.

U.S. nuclear planning needs a better understanding of Japanese (and other allies’) thinking about strategic weapons, especially as the Obama administration prepares the next NPR. The failure to understand those concerns has created problems in the past: during the intermediate nuclear force (INF) discussions in the 1980s, the U.S. was prepared to let the Soviets redeploy weapons formerly targeting Europe behind the Urals, until Japan complained that the policy shifted the imbalances to the Asian theater. Typically, allies have been informed of the results of the NPR process after the fact. All participants suggested that not be the case in 2009. Given the concerns that surround the U.S. nuclear posture, the need to reassure allies and deter adversaries, how can such input be obtained? This effort should take place on many levels – Japanese embassy outreach in Washington, track-two meetings, and discussions among defense and security officials. Japanese analysts should be discussing issues of concern in public forums so that their U.S. counterparts are aware of them: publications in open source journals can draw attention to critical issues and provide windows on Japanese thinking. Another U.S. speaker endorsed that view, but warned that unofficial discussions are not enough. Although the issue may touch on domestic sensitivities, Japan must weigh in at the official level and leave no room for misinterpretation. U.S. officials must be receptive and open to obtaining Japanese views on the NPR.

### **Views of the U.S.-Japan Defense Relationship**

The fourth session returned to a broader perspective: views of the U.S.-Japan defense relationship. A Japanese presenter began by noting that Japan’s neighborhood contained all the security challenges outlined in the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR): irregular challenges (abductions of Japanese citizens by North Korea), catastrophic challenges (weapons of mass destruction), traditional challenges (the standoff across the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel), and disruptive challenges (a shift in the regional balance of power). For both Japan and the U.S., three Security Consultative Committee (SCC, sometimes known as the “2+2 meeting” of secretaries/ministers of defense and foreign affairs) statements lay out the vision for the alliance, the roles, capabilities, and missions of the two partners, and the roadmap to get from one to the other. Our Japanese speaker, along with others, highlighted the capabilities that Japan can contribute to the alliance: antisubmarine warfare (ASW), CH47 heavy helicopters, P3Cs, and Aegis-equipped destroyers, as well as in the nonmilitary realm, such as post-conflict reconstruction and police training.

Three items topped his “must do” list for the alliance. First implementation of previous agreements, especially the May 2006 SCC roadmap, is critical – in particular, the relocation of the Futenma Air Station. The second item is a decision on the next generation fighter for Japan. Tokyo wants the F-22 – if it is affordable – to deal with the modernization of PLA Air Force capabilities and pending deployment of fifth-generation fighters in China.

He argued that “saying no is better than delaying a decision.” The third item concerns Afghanistan: the U.S. must show its determination to solve that problem. Doing so will signal the Japanese public on the need for Tokyo to step up as well. Absent real U.S. action there – and progress – a substantive Japanese contribution will be difficult to muster.

Finally, our speaker, along with other Japanese participants – and Americans, for that matter – insisted that *Japan cannot use the political chaos in Tokyo as an excuse for inaction*. Doing so risks marginalizing itself, a process that appears to be underway. Japan has to step up and contribute as an ally and as a responsible stakeholder. That second point was hammered home by almost all Japanese participants. Japan has to understand its national interests and what is required to protect them. Too often, contributions to international security concerns – both regional and global – are framed as alliance issues. They may be, but Japanese citizens, and the Tokyo government, must understand them as national security issues *first*. Japan should be prepared to act regardless of its alliance commitments. Its relationship with the U.S. is a vehicle to take action, not necessarily a reason to act.

Discussion explored two interlocking sets of issues. The first is defense economics. Japan (like other governments) faces intense budget pressure. Japan’s defense spending is capped by a limit of 1 percent of GDP. Short-term pressures are expanding as Japan deals with a global economic crisis and an economy that contracted 12 percent in the third quarter of fiscal 2009. Over the longer term, Japan’s graying society will further constrict the funds available for defense.

Meanwhile, China’s military enjoys double-digit budget increases. Japan must buy more sophisticated weapons to deal with a widening range of threats. The increasing share of the defense budget claimed by items such as missile defense compounds the squeeze. Defense planners ask with increasing concern how much is enough, where will the country get those funds, or, more often, how will the country spend increasingly tight defense funds. And all the while, defense spending has decreased in recent years.

A second set of concerns is political. Gridlock is one issue, but politicians’ reluctance to spend political capital on the alliance or defense needs also reflects Japan’s deep-rooted adherence to pacifist norms and the commitment to “*heiwa koka*” (peaceful country). While Japan’s trajectory since 1991 suggests a greater national willingness to take on security commitments, the discussion this year suggested old habits are re-emerging. At the very least, at a time of domestic political turmoil, politicians see little return in pushing for more adventurous and potentially dangerous new security commitments. One Japanese participant qualified that judgment, however. While conceding that there are powerful pacifist sentiments in Japan – a point of considerable national pride – he pointed out that Japan also wants to be a respected member of international society and recognizes that playing a security role is part of that ambition. To square a difficult circle, Japanese policymakers seek to make contributions that are not directly related to war-fighting. For him, that represents an outdated view of the role of militaries: increasingly they are tools to make peace, not wage war.

The debate over the appropriate form of Japanese contributions was evident as the government mulled the dispatch of Maritime Self-Defense Force vessels to the coast of Somalia to join the international force fighting piracy. When asked if the dispatch of PLA Navy vessels to the coalition influenced thinking in Tokyo, Japanese denied that the Chinese move forced Japan's hand: discussions had been underway for months. The PLA dispatch helped silence dissenters, however. One Japanese participant noted that Chinese activism can "help" Japan overcome political obstacles to playing a larger international role. At the same time, this participant also argued that China and Japan should work harder to find common interests and develop habits of cooperation to deal with shared threats and concerns.

There is another political issue: concern that a change in government in Japan could undercut implementation of the SCC roadmap. Some worry that the left wing of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) would have more influence over security policy and diminish Tokyo's commitment to the alliance. Reportedly, the party leadership has sent signals to both the U.S. and the security establishment in Japan that a DPJ win would not damage the alliance. The signing of an agreement by Secretary of State Clinton and Foreign Minister Nakasone that formalizes the relocation of U.S. marines from Okinawa to Guam is intended to lock in that commitment no matter which party governs Japan.

Some issues straddle the two concerns. For example, the F-22 looms large in the Japanese strategic mindset. As China modernizes its air force, the need for a new Japanese fighter is ever more urgent. The F-22 is Tokyo's weapon of choice, but the U.S. Congress bans its sale to foreign governments. As our speaker noted, the U.S. must decide if it will make the F-22 available to Japan. When asked if the F-22 was going to be a litmus test for the alliance, he, along with others, warned that a blanket prohibition on F-22 sales would be acceptable; selling it to some allies, and not Japan, would not. (One Japanese participant suggested that some would interpret a U.S. refusal to sell that fighter to Japan as proof of a desire to keep Japan subordinate to the U.S.) Some warned that the F-22 price tag might be steep enough to discourage Japan from purchasing it even if it becomes available. If the F-22 is not available, Japan has other options. One possibility is purchasing the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter. Concerns about its capabilities have prompted suggestions that Tokyo turn to Europe and buy a European aircraft. Some of our Japanese participants argued that the suggestion to buy the European fighter was designed to increase Tokyo's leverage in negotiations with the U.S.; at best, it is a suboptimal solution that raises interoperability issues given the predominance of U.S. hardware elsewhere in the SDF.

The entire group agreed that Japan has to do more to get in front of the U.S. Rather than waiting for Washington's requests for assistance and the inevitable disappointments, Tokyo should be anticipating problems and outlining ways it can respond. One Japanese speaker noted that a decade ago it took Tokyo several years to draw up a list of ways it could contribute to the alliance after the 1996 Defense Cooperation Guidelines were promulgated. There was considerable emphasis on Japan's nonmilitary contributions, several of which were already visible in Afghanistan: construction of schools and police stations, law enforcement training, paying police salaries, demining, and the dispatch of medical teams. Revitalizing the country's agricultural sector is a top priority and Japan can help here too.

A U.S. view of the alliance followed and the convergence of thinking between the two allies is reassuring. Both see the alliance as the foundation of the regional security structure. Over the past two decades, the alliance has broadened and expanded, taking on regional and global challenges. Japan deserves credit for adopting a vision and making efforts that make this new relationship possible. The division of labor is clear and well understood: the U.S. is committed to Japan's defense. In exchange, Japan provides forward bases and host nation support to defray costs, and is working to pick up more of the burden of its own defense (with help from the U.S. to enhance Japanese capabilities). Slowly, Tokyo's reach has expanded, from 1,000 nautical miles from Japan's coast to "situations in areas surrounding Japan," to the Indian Ocean and now to Somalia. Most significantly, the U.S. has a stake in seeing Japan be a player with a major stake in the international system. Topping a long list of shared concerns is helping manage the rise of China.

There is concern about the Chinese reaction to attempts to strengthen the alliance and shore up the extended deterrent. Some China strategists don't believe that missile defense is intended to defend against North Korea but represents an attempt to blunt or eliminate the Chinese deterrent. In bilateral discussions, Americans have told Chinese counterparts that a nonnuclear Japan requires a U.S. extended deterrent: slowly, that understanding is gaining traction in Beijing. According to one U.S. participant, there is no longer complete objection to strengthening reassurance between the U.S. and Japan. But, Chinese strategists – along with their Japanese and U.S. counterparts – want a better understanding among the three countries of their respective red lines.

Despite all the agreement, there are gaps in the strategic consensus. The need for discussions on deterrence and reassurance is plain. A mechanism for such talks needs to be established. But, many differences concern nuts and bolts issues and operational concerns. Implementation of the roadmap and the revised roles and missions tops the list. Most of the projects are proceeding but several are stalled: unfortunately, they are high-profile items. While attention is focused on Japanese commitments, U.S. participants reminded the group that U.S. fulfillment of its promises cannot be taken for granted. Alliance supporters need to work to ensure that Congress understands the stakes and has a realistic and accurate assessment of the relationship. For example, a failure by Congress to fund the Guam relocation, especially if it results in a U.S. request for more money from Japan, could add strains to the alliance since Tokyo believes it has been extremely forthcoming on this issue, despite domestic political constraints.

An ongoing concern and one that is rising in importance is better protection by Japan of sensitive information. The inability to safeguard information is a serious inhibition to the type of talks that both countries need to address alliance issues. Both countries also need to work, along with other concerned governments, on preparing for Korean Peninsula contingencies. Despite recognition of the centrality of Korean Peninsula developments to regional security, there has been little if any progress here. Another big U.S. concern is Japanese readiness (and ability) to pay its share of costs of the alliance and force relocation.

At this point in the discussion, a contradiction emerged. While Japanese and Americans agree the two allies need to talk about extended deterrence and how it works,

Japanese appear increasingly wary of political sensitivities surrounding those discussions. Nuclear discussions are always touchy, especially in Japan, but in previous meetings it sounded as though the taboo had softened, Japan had matured, and the topic no longer constituted “a third rail” that could end a political or bureaucratic career. This year, however, old defenses were resurrected. Japanese participants warned against making such talks public, arguing that doing so risked derailing or sidetracking discussions of more immediate concern.

Japanese participants reminded their U.S. counterparts that support for the alliance in Japan depends to some degree on perceptions of the U.S. As one put it, Japanese ask, “is the U.S. still a country that we want to cooperate with?” Events in recent years have damaged the U.S. image to a point where the answer can’t be assumed. The significance of the answer is enhanced by the widespread belief in Japan that Tokyo has backed the U.S. during the last eight years when such positions were not always popular. In other words, Japanese feel their aid to the U.S. has not been reciprocated or appreciated.

One topic that continues to elude scrutiny is the Japanese debate over the acquisition of offensive strike or pre-emption capabilities. In recent years, this has looked more appealing to Japanese strategists. Thus far, Japan still lacks the ability to take such action. That may change.

### **The Future of the Relationship**

We then turned to the future of the relationship. A Japanese presenter underscored the diversity of threats that will be arising in the region over the next two decades, emphasizing that most of them aren’t traditional security challenges. Instead, there is rising nationalism, terrorism, extremist religions, and dealing with the impact of a rising China. The alliance will be key to handling these challenges, but it isn’t enough. Rather, the U.S. and Japan need to promote functional regional cooperation, both among the “spokes” of the alliance system and other parties. To do that, there should be more attention to various “trilaterals”; particular attention should be given to the ROK to allay fears of “Seoul passing.” He highlighted economic concerns, noting that the relationship between the current economic crisis and security cooperation is unclear. Economic interdependence within the region could encourage countries to work together and spur greater cooperation. Alternatively, it could encourage zero-sum calculations that create greater tensions. For the most part, there was agreement that interdependence mitigates conflict and should help dampen regional tensions – even in the event of a downturn.

A U.S. presenter echoed the thinking of a previous speaker, noting the increasingly intertwined nature of U.S. and Japanese interests and the centrality of the alliance to the protection of those interests. The bargain previously explained – protection for Japan in exchange for valuable real estate – is the product of “hardnosed geostrategic realism” and reflects the belief, growing in recent years, that Northeast Asia is a dangerous neighborhood. Indeed the success of this relationship may well be measured by how much the two countries take the alliance for granted.

Fifty years after its foundation, the U.S. speaker argued it is *time to reiterate the two countries' shared vision*. This would remind the publics of the vital role this alliance plays as well as provide momentum for a strategic dialogue and the creation of institutions to address the issues outlined in this report. The obstacles to the realization of this project have been identified in the preceding pages: money, political uncertainty in Japan, Tokyo's failure to lay out a vision for its future, and fear of the Chinese reaction. The speaker warned that Beijing should not have a veto over the alliance's future.

That does not mean that China should be ignored. Rather, the key is balance – respecting Chinese interests without appearing to be a supplicant or seeking Beijing's favor – and engaging China across a range of issues and in a variety of venues – bilateral, trilateral, multilateral. Washington and Tokyo, together and on their own, should be working to shape Chinese choices and encouraging China to be a responsible stakeholder. On the military front, Beijing must not be allowed to field a capability that the alliance cannot counter.

While there is agreement – in general – on how to engage China, differences quickly emerge when attention turns to specific concerns. It is hard enough for one country to reach a comfortable balance between engaging and hedging against China; getting two to do so, in tandem, not only strains relations between each and China but between themselves. One Japanese noted that there is discomfort in Tokyo about the “responsible stakeholder” concept and its implications for relations with Beijing. The call for “an arc of freedom and prosperity” exposed Tokyo's problem: it was not clear how China fit into that strategy. Calls for a G2 between the U.S. and China add to the friction, feeding fears of “Japan passing” in Tokyo.

Alliance relations with China are part of a larger question: how will the U.S. and Japan as allies engage other countries in the region? There is increasing attention to trilateral relations – whether with allies such as the ROK or Australia, “like minded countries” such as India, or China. Success in this effort requires identifying the proper level of engagement, the proper area, and dealing with governments that are excluded. Seoul is increasingly uneasy about regional discussions to which it isn't invited. Linking the various discussions is one option, but that isn't a very efficient response. While Americans showed little concern about meetings where the U.S. is not represented, one U.S. speaker did wonder if such relations risked devaluing the alliance.

A great deal of the uncertainty would diminish if both sides felt that they had a clear understanding of the alliance's purposes and its responses in crisis. While there is consensus on the grand design, it quickly vanishes when specific challenges are posed. Yes, the alliance is designed to protect Japan and deter an attack; if we try to ascertain exactly how that will happen, doubts emerge. One American participant argued that the ambiguity that had once served the two countries well had become a source of tension.

This uncertainty reflects a fundamental issue: the absence of a vision from Tokyo about its role within the alliance. An arrangement has been worked out, but it seems to reflect a process of continual prodding by the U.S. to get Japan to “step up.” Absent a statement of Japanese strategic interests and the way they will be realized, the alliance becomes a vehicle

for ad hoc responses to crises. Making that statement is hard, if not impossible, at a time of domestic political turmoil: politicians have other, more pressing concerns and there is little reward for doing more than affirming the broad contours of the relationship with the U.S.

The question is whether that approach is sustainable in an evolving regional and global security environment created by new political and economic realities. Caution – and the question itself – would suggest the answer is “no.” A Japanese participant suggested that both sides recognize the centrality of their relationship to the pursuit and realization of each’s national interests. He identified Iran as a test case for the two countries’ global cooperation. Again, however, that begs the question: what does that mean in specific terms?

Plainly, the time has come for the two countries to flesh out the bones of their alliance relationship. The roles, capabilities, and missions identified in the SCC are one attempt to do that. But progress has been fitful, stymied by political difficulties and economic troubles. Several participants argued that the two countries could find a common purpose and agenda by looking beyond the military framework of their relationship. One expert argued that the 2010 NPT Review Conference would be a test for the alliance and devising a complementary strategy should be a key element of their partnership. Areas of coordination include negative security assurances, Article X of the NPT (the withdrawal clause), and compliance and enforcement issues more generally. That expert also noted that Iran’s efforts to get one of its diplomats named chair of the Review Conference would make it almost impossible for the U.S. to support that meeting. It was suggested that Japan take the lead in a diplomatic campaign to head off that possibility as Tokyo is likely to be more successful than the U.S. – or at least seen as more neutral.

Others pointed to operations other than war (OOTW) as the best way for Japan to contribute. If the two countries broaden their definition of security, then they expand the opportunities for cooperation and Japanese contributions, while sidestepping legal and constitutional constraints. In this way, explained one Japanese participant, the alliance can become a framework for working with other states to maintain the existing international order, and most importantly, maintain a Northeast Asian nuclear order acceptable to Japan.

“Acceptable” is a psychological state, however. Efforts to fix and define such a condition – expecting it to endure without change – will fail. The challenge for the U.S. and Japan is to understand each other’s expectations, to be able to reassure that partner that those concerns will be respected, and then to respond when interests are threatened in ways that meet those expectations. The problem is that the two countries’ interests and expectations are not identical. And no issue betrays more uncertainty and elicits higher expectations than the U.S. commitment to defend Japan – or Tokyo’s decision to nestle under the U.S. nuclear umbrella.



**U.S.-Japan Strategic Dialogue  
February 8-10, 2009**

**AGENDA**

**February 8, 2009 - SUNDAY**

6:30 PM Welcome Reception and Dinner

**February 9, 2009 - MONDAY**

9:00 AM Opening Remarks (Introductions, review of 2008 meeting, and Dec. trip)

9:30 AM Session I: Perceptions of Asian and Global Strategic Security Environments

This session explores each country's view of the global and regional security environment, to identify issues, and highlight shared and divergent concerns. How does each country see the Asian balance of power? What are the principle threats to each country? To the regional balance of power? How are these threats best tackled? How have the perceptions and concerns highlighted at last year's meeting changed? Is the alliance relationship better or worse than a year ago? Why? Topics could include China's growing status and influence; relations with Taiwan and the cross-Strait relationship; North Korea and prospects for relations with Pyongyang; relations with South Korea; the Middle East, Central and South Asian challenges. This overview will set the stage for subsequent discussions of U.S. and Japanese security policies and efforts to address these challenges.

11:00 AM Coffee Break

11:15 AM Session II: Perceptions of Global Nonproliferation/Counterproliferation Strategies

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, in particular the spread of nuclear weapons, has been identified as one of the top security threats by President Obama and numerous U.S. national security documents. Do both countries agree on the threat posed by nuclear weapons proliferation? Its priority? The response? Do they agree on the status of the global nonproliferation regime and ways to strengthen it? How should the two countries approach the 2010 NPT Review Conference? How can the U.S. balance commitments to defend its allies with Article VI disarmament obligations?

**February 9, 2009 - MONDAY**

1:30 PM Session III: Understanding Deterrence and the Roles of Strategic Systems  
*Session IIIA: America's Strategic Security Vision for Asia*

This session explores the role of nuclear weapons and strategic systems (such as missile defense and other defense technologies) in U.S. national security strategy. What is the current posture? What changes can be expected in the Obama administration? Can we anticipate some of the thinking in the next Nuclear Posture Review? Speakers should focus on the strategic implications in East Asia and ways that the global nonproliferation regime can impact U.S. strategy.

3:00 PM Coffee Break

3:15 PM      ***Session IIIB: Japan's Strategic Security Vision for Asia***

How does Japan view nuclear weapons and strategic systems? Is this view changing? Why? How does it view the nuclear balance of power in East Asia? How does North Korean proliferation affect this situation? What is the status of the nuclear debate in Japan? How does Japan view extended deterrence? What implications does this have for the alliance with the United States? What does Japan wish to see (or not see) in the next U.S. Nuclear Posture Review?

6:30 PM      Reception and Dinner

**February 10, 2009 - TUESDAY**

9:00 AM      Session IV: Views of the U.S.-Japan Defense Relationship – Roles and Responsibilities

***Session IVA: Japan's Perspective***

This session focuses on respective views of the bilateral security alliance. How does Japan view its role and that of the Self-Defense Forces in regional and global security challenges? Is that view changing? How does Japan see the alliance functioning? What is Japan's role in the alliance? What progress has been made on implementation of the May 2006 "United States-Japan Roadmap for Realignment Implementation"? What obstacles exist to future implementation? What can be done to overcome them?

10:30 AM      Coffee Break

**February 10, 2009 - TUESDAY**

10:45 AM      ***Session IVB: U.S. Perspective***

How does the U.S. see its alliance with Japan? What are the two countries' respective roles within the alliance? What are the key issues in and obstacles to future development of the alliance and the realization of those roles and objectives? How will the redeployment of U.S. forces in Japan affect the alliance? What are Washington's expectations? What does it want Japan to contribute to the alliance?

12:30 PM      Lunch

2:00 PM      Session V: Enhancing Collaborative, Cooperative Strategic Security Activities

This session will focus on the future of the alliance and ways to make it more effective. Do the two countries share a common vision of the alliance? What is it? What are the key challenges to the realization of that vision? How can the two countries ensure that the alliance contributes to national defense and regional security? How can the alliance work with other U.S. allies – in particular, the ROK but also Australia – and partners, such as India? How can it engage China? How can Japan influence the U.S. Nuclear Posture Review and how can both countries influence the 2010 NPT Review Conference?

3:30 PM      Session VI: Conclusions and Wrap Up

**U.S.-Japan Strategic Dialogue**  
**February 8-10, 2009**

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